

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 172516

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOGADISCIO 1533 ACTION SECSTATE INFO HORN
OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE DATED JULY 7, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1533

DEPARTMENT PASS HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, SO, ET, US

SUBJ: SAMATAR DENIES GSDR SUPPORT TO INSURGENTS; OFFERS US OBSERVERS
FULL FACILITIES

REF: STATE 169194

1. VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE LT. GEN. MOHAMED ALI
SAMATAR TOLD VISITING CONGRESSMEN LEGGETT AND DUNCAN THAT GSDR
HAS NO CONTROL OF WESTERN SOMALI "FREEDOM FIGHTERS" AND CANNOT
STOP THEIR ACTIVITIES. DURING A TWO-HOUR CALL ON JULY 6, THE
SOMALI MILITARY CHIEF REPEATEDLY RETURNED TO THIS THEME,
CAUTIONING HIS LISTENERS THAT IF THE U.S. PUNISHES THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (GSDR) FOR THE
ACTIONS OF THE "FREEDOM FIGHTERS", IT WOULD BE A GREAT MISTAKE.
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2. GENERAL SAMATAR ASSERTED THAT THE ONLY AIM OF THE GSDR IS
SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF "WESTERN SOMALIA." HE SAID
THE GSDR HAS NO GOAL OF ANNEXING THE AREA. "EVEN IF THEY
(THE WESTERN SOMALIS) CHOSE TO REMAIN PART OF ETHIOPIA," THE

GENERAL SAID, "THAT IS AGREEABLE TO US." HE SAID THE GSDR CAN-

NOT BUILD A NATION WITHOUT PEACE IN THE AREA. HE ADDED THE THREAT IS MORE THAN VOCAL, POINTING OUT THAT ETHIOPIAN PLANES HAVE BOMBED A CITY ONLY 300 KMS FROM MOGADISCIO. THE SOMALI GENERAL MADE A STRONG BID FOR US MILITARY SUPPORT AND ACTIVE INTERVENTION IN ARRANGING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. HE ALSO CONTENDED THE INSURGENT FORCES WERE BETTER ARMED THAN THE SOMALI NATIONAL ARMY. HE SAID IF THE US HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE SNA ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE INSURGENCY, IT COULD SEND OBSERVERS AND THE GSDR WOULD GIVE THEM "FULL FACILITIES." CONTINUING HIS ARGUMENT, HE SAID THAT OF COURSE "WE HELP THE WOUNDED, AND WE CANNOT IGNORE HUMAN NEEDS, BUT WHAT WE REALLY WANT IS PEACE FOR THE REGION."

3. THE GENERAL SAID THAT THE GSDR HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO DEFEND ITS SOVEREIGNTY WHEN ATTACKED. HE ADDED THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GSDR AND THE OGADENIS MUST BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD, EXPLAINING THAT OGADENIS HELPED THE SDR TO OBTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE. "NO SOMALI COULD SAY NO TO CRIES FOR SUPPORT FROM THE OGADEN." SAMATAR SAID THE SITUATION IS BIGGER THAN A BILATERAL QUARREL. HE ADDED THAT THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS INVOLVED HAVE BROADER STRATEGIC AIMS.

4. WHEN CHAIRMAN LEGGETT PRESSED FOR A REDUCTION IN INSURGENT ACTIVITY AND URGED A GSDR CONCENTRATION ON NATION BUILDING INSTEAD, SAMATAR RETURNED FORCEFULLY TO HIS ASSERTION THAT THE GSDR IS NOT SUPPORTING THE INSURGENCY WITH MILITARY ASSISTANCE. HE ARGUED THAT THE GSDR IS DOING EVERYTHING IT CONFIDENTIAL

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CAN TO AVOID PROVOCATIONS AND RETALIATORY ACTIONS, EVEN WHEN SUCH COURSES ARE OPEN TO IT. HE ASKED WHAT THE U.S. WOULD DO IF ITS CITIES WERE ATTACKED BY AIR, AND ASSERTED THE SOMALI PEOPLE WERE PUTTING THE QUESTION OF SNA INACTIVITY TO HIM. IN CLOSING HE PROPOSED A STATEMENT BY THE U.S. THAT IT WOULD NOT STAND BY WERE SOMALIA ATTACKED. THIS HE SAID, WOULD HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON THE SITUATION. THE GENERAL SAID TIME, HOWEVER, WAS RUNNING OUT ON SOMALIA AND HE AGAIN ASKED FOR AN INDICATION OF STRONG U.S. SUPPORT.

5. SAMATAR SPOKE IN SOMALI. PROTOCOL CHIEF BASI DID THE TRANSLATIONS, APPARENTLY WITHOUT ANY PROBLEM. THE FOREGOING WAS NOT CLEARED WITH CODEL LEGGETT WHICH WAS OUT OF TOWN WHEN THIS CABLE WAS WRITTEN.

6. CODEL IS SCHEDULED TO SEE PRESIDENT SAID THIS EVENING, JULY 7. RECEPTION BY ALL ELEMENTS OF THE GSDR UP TO NOW HAS BEEN EXCELLENT WITH UNUSUALLY GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY AND HIGH LEVEL ATTENDANCE AT SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FORMAL CALLS. VICE PRESIDENT KULMIE HOSTED THE GSDR DINNER LAST NIGHT WITH THREE OTHER MINISTERS PLUS OTHER RANKING GOVT AND PARTY OFFICIALS PRESENT. FULL SUMMARY

REPORT FOLLOWS IN SEPTTEL.

7. COMMENT: SAMATAR'S REFERENCE TO U.S. OBSERVERS SUGGESTS
POSSIBLE APPROACH TO THE REDUCTION OF VIOLENCE IN THE OGADEN.
ALTHOUGH IT IS OUT RECOLLECTION THAT BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA
SOMALIA REJECTED AN INTERNATIONAL OBSERVER PRESENCE IN THE AFTERMATH
OF THE CONVENTIONAL WAR LAST MARCH, IT MAY BE WORTH EXPLORING THE
TOPIC AGAIN.

VOUGHT
UNQUOTE VANCE

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